Poor Robin's

TRUE

CHARACTER

OF A

SCOLD:

OR, THE

Shrews Looking-glass.

DEDICATED

To all { Domineering Dames, Wives Rampant, Cuckolds Couchant, and Hen-peckt Sneaks, }

In City or Country.

With Allowance.

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Poor Robin's

True Character of a SCOLD.

A Rank SCOLD is a Devil of the Feminine gender; a *Serpent*, perpetually hiſſing, and ſpitting of Venom; a Compoſition of *Ill-nature* and *Clamour*. You may call her animated *Gun-powder*, a walking Mount *Ætna* that is always belching forth flames of Sulphur, or a Real *Purgatory*, more to be dreaded in this world, than the Popes Imaginary *Hot-houſe* in the next. A *Burr* about the Moon, is not half ſo certain a Preſage of a *Tempeſt* at Sea, as her *Brow* is of a Storm on Land. And though *Laurel*, *Haw-thorn*, and *Seal-ſkin* are held Preſervatives againſt *Thunder*, Magick has not yet been able to finde any *Amulet* ſo Sovereign as to ſtill her Ravings; for, like Oyl pour'd on Flames, Good words do but make her Rage the faſter; and when once her

Flag of Defiance, the Tippet, is unfurl'd, ſhe cares not a ſtraw for Conſtable nor Cucking-ſtool.

Her Tongue is the *Clapper* of the Devil's *Saints-bell*, that rings *all-in* to Confuſion: It runs round like a Wheel, one ſpoak after another, and makes more *Noiſe and Jangling*, than Country-Steeples on the Fifth of *November*. She is never leſs at *eaſe*, than when ſhe is *quiet*; never *quiet*, but when ſhe is *ſleeping*; nor then neither: for either ſhe *talks* in her Dream, or awakes the whole houſe with a terrible fit of *Snoring*. She makes ſuch a Pattering with her Lips when ſhe walks the ſtreets, as if ſhe were *poſſeſt*; and ſo indeed ſhe is, with the *Spirit of Contention*. The *Dog-days*, with her, continue all the year round; nor can ſhe poſſibly take *Cold*; for ſhe is ever *in an Heat*, and holds neither *Pox* nor *Plague* ſo grievous a Diſeaſe, as being *Tongue-ty'd*.

She makes an Aſs of *Ariſtotle*, and demonſtrates, That though every *man* be, yet many a *woman* is not, *A ſociable Creature*: for there is no Good humour can charm her to be Civil or Agreeable; no Company, how affable or compaiſant ſoever, that can long content her. She ſeeks occaſions for Railing, as eagerly as a Common Barretor does to go to Law. If you will not anger her, ſhe will be angry with you for thus neglecting her: and you cannot vex her worſe, than to be ſilent, unleſs you ſing or whiſtle at her Folly. She in-

terprets

terprets all she hears in the worst sense, and supplies the defect of real Affronts with jealous *suspitions*. She is more *captious*, than *capable* of Offence; and all her Neighbours bless themselves from her, wishing this *Quotidian Feaver* of her Tongue cur'd with a Razor. Yet is not that her onely weapon; for she has Hands to Clap with, and Nails to Scratch with, and Teeth to Bite with, and much more Furniture for War; so that being lookt upon as Invincible, her bad humour gets her a *Privileage*: for where-ever she comes, she may be sure to have the *Room* to her self; nor needs long Contest for priority of *Walk*, or precedency at *Table*, or opinion in Argument: for the *prondest Gossip* will quit Pretensions, rather than stand the *Shock* of her well-known *Rhetorick*.

If she be of the precisest Cast, she abuses *Sacred Language* in her Railing, as Conjurers do in their Charms; calls her Neighbours *Heathen Edomites*, her Husband, *Reprobate*, or *Son of Belial*, and will not *cudgel* her Maid without a Text for't. But now I speak of Husband, methinks I see the *creeping Snail* shivering in an Ague fit when he comes in her presence. She is worse than Cow-itch in his Bed, and as good as a Chafing-dish at Board: but has either quite *forgot* his *Name*, or else she *likes* it not; which makes her *Rebaptize* him with more noble Titles, as *White-liver'd Raskal*, *Drunken Sot*, *Smoaking Nin-*

Ninkompoop, or *pitiful lowſy Tom Farthing*. Thus ſhe worries him out of his ſenſes at home, and then ferrets his Haunts abroad worſe than a needy Bawd does a decay'd Bully's. Taverns and Ale-houſes dread her ſingle Alarm, more than the joynt Attaques of the Conſtable and Watch; and his Companions are content to pay his Club and diſmiſs him, on news of her approach, rather than be at the charge of ſo many Glaſſes and Bottles as ſhe will quickly ſalute his Coxcomb with. A full Glaſs ſeaſonably offered, may ſometimes pacifie her for a moment; but immediately the Ill ſpirit returns, and ſhe can be quiet onely juſt ſo long as ſhe is drinking. Thus ſhe clamours at him ſo long without occaſion, that at laſt he gives her enough; and rails at him for keeping Ill Company, till ſhe forces him to it; being aſham'd to go into any Good Society, or they aſham'd of him; which makes him ſeek blinde Bubbing-ſchools to hide himſelf in from her fury, and reſolve to ſtay out all Night, rather than endure a double Rally.

In a word, (for I perceive our Character begins to be infected with the contagious Talkativeneſs of its ſubject) a *virulent Scold* is her Neighbours perpetual Diſquiet, her Families Evil Genius, her Huſbands Ruine, and her own dayly Tormentor: And that you may the better know her Pedigree, I'll give you a ſerious Account of the Receipt or Method made uſe of for her Production into the world,

world, lately found in a long-concealed Manuſcript of *Theophraſtus Bombaſtus Paracelſus*, as follows: *viz.*

That Nature long ſince finding many of her Sons oft-times bewitcht to their own Ruine by the Charms of Women, for their puniſhment contriv'd this Monſter call'd *A Scold*: To form which, She firſt took of the Tongues and Galls of Bulls, Bears, Wolves, Magpies, Parrets, Cuckows, and Nightingales, of each a like number: The Tongues and Tails of Vipers, Adders, Snakes and Lizards, Seven apiece: Aurum Fulminans, Aqua Fortis and Gun-powder, of each one pound: The Clappers of Nineteen Bells, and the Peſtles of a dozen Apothecaries Mortars. Which being all mixt, ſhe calcin'd in Mount *Strombelo*, and diſſolv'd the Aſhes in a water diſtill'd juſt under *London*-bridge at three quarters Flood, and filtrated it through the leaves of *Calepines* Dictionary, to render the Operation more verbal. After which, ſhe diſtill'd it again through a Speaking-Trumpet, and cloſed up the remaining Spirits in the mouth of a Cannon. Then ſhe open'd the Graves of all new-deceaſed Pettifoggers, Mountebanks, Barbers, Coffee-newsmongers, and Fiſh-wives; and with the ſkin of their Tongues, made a Bladder cover'd o're with Drum-heads, and fill'd with Storms, Tempeſts, Whirlwinds, Thunders, Lightnings, *&c.* Theſe, for better Incorporation, ſhe ſet ſeven years in a rough Sea to ferment, and then mixing them with

the

the reſt, rectified the whole three times a day for a Twelvemonth in a Baloco of Quick-ſilver. Laſtly, to irrabiate the whole Elixir, and make it more Churliſh, ſhe cut a vein under the Tongue of the Dog-ſtar, drawing thence a pound of the moſt Cholerick blood; from which ſublimating the Spirits, ſhe mixt them with the Foam of a mad Dog: and then putting all together in the forementioned Bladder, ſtitcht it up with the Nerves of *Socrates*'s Wife.

Out of this noble Preparation, and a *Crooked Rib* (Emblem of future Croſſneſs) Dame Nature firſt compoſed a SHREW, whoſe Poſterity (as is frequent with noxious Animals) has ſince ſo over-ſpread the world, that ſcarce an *Alley* or *Village* is free from ſome of her Lineage.

But that you may ſee her End as well as Beginning, be pleaſed to peruſe this

EPITAPH.

After ſome Threeſcore years of Catterwauling,
Here lies A SCOLD, *ſtopt from above-ground Bawling.*
Though Ill ſhe liv'd, I dare not read her Doom;
But ſure, go where ſhe will, ſhe's Troubleſome.
I wiſh her, in Revenge, amongſt the Bleſt:
For ſhe'd as lief be Damn'd, as be at Reſt.

FINIS.